

SENATE BILL 2546

By Finney L

AN ACT to designate a segment of U.S. Highway 45 as the "Rockabilly Highway".

WHEREAS, Tennessee has long been known throughout the world for its rich music heritage; from the Appalachian Mountains through Music City U.S.A. to the shores of the Mississippi, the talented musicians of this State have earned a reputation that is unsurpassed in the history of American music; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1950s, the unique sounds of each of Tennessee's Grand Divisions were melded together to form a new sound that soon took the music industry by storm – Rockabilly; and

WHEREAS, fueled by the unbridled success of such stars as Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Roy Orbison, and Bill Haley and the Comets, Rockabilly music soon filled America's airwaves with its driving guitar licks, heavy snare drum beat, and strong vocals; and

WHEREAS, the Rockabilly sound has proven to be timeless; even today, music fans, young and old, instinctively begin to move their feet whenever they hear any of the countless Rockabilly classics; and

WHEREAS, the International Rock-A-Billy Music Hall of Fame, Inc., in Jackson, which honors the genre's talented musicians, has proven immensely popular among devoted fans who flock to the museum to view rare photographs and memorabilia and learn about the history of Rockabilly music; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly wishes to offer a permanent tribute to this homegrown musical genre that has gained international popularity; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the segment of U.S. Highway 45 in Madison, Chester, and McNairy counties from the northern corporate limits of the City of Jackson to the Tennessee - Mississippi state boundary is hereby designated as the "Rockabilly Highway" in honor of this exhilarating genre of popular music that was born and raised in Tennessee.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the segment of U.S. Highway 45 described in Section 1 as the "Rockabilly Highway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. The appellation "Rockabilly Highway" provided for in this act is for honorary purposes only and nothing contained herein shall be construed as requiring the alteration of any address, or the governmental system for assigning addresses, in any county, municipality or other governmental entity affected by this act.

SECTION 6. Nothing contained in this act shall be construed as requiring the alteration of any previously named segment or segments of any highway described in this act as the "Rockabilly Highway".

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.